

Exodus 25:1-22 - Thursday, March 19th, 2009

- We're about to embark on one of the most fascinating studies in the entire Bible; the study of the Tabernacle and its prophetic purpose.

1 Then the LORD spoke to Moses, saying: 2 "Speak to the children of Israel, that they bring Me an offering. From everyone who gives it willingly with his heart you shall take My offering.

- Moses, who is before the Lord on Mount Sinai, is told by God what to speak to the Israelites concerning what they are to now do.

- First things first though, they are to bring God an offering willingly, not grudgingly, out of their heart, not out of compulsion or coercion.

- Again, God wants a relationship with His people, and this offering was to be, as one has called it, a "get to," not a "got to."

- There's something else here that we don't want to miss. Notice how God has Moses "take His offering," before knowing what it's for?

- This is huge because it reminds us how our cheerful giving should be a free will offering, and not primarily a need driven donation.

- In other words, God doesn't need us to give to Him, we are the ones who need to give to Him, and to do so is to be more like Him.

2 Corinthians 9:7-11 7 Each man should give what he has decided in his heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. 8 And God is able to make all grace abound to you, so that in all things at all times, having all that you need, you will abound in every good work. 9 As it is written: "He has scattered abroad his gifts to the poor; his righteousness endures forever." 10 Now he who supplies seed to the sower and bread for food will also supply and increase your store of seed and will enlarge the harvest of your righteousness. 11 You will be made rich in every way so that you can be generous on every occasion, and through us your generosity will result in thanksgiving to God. NIV

- It's interesting to note that the Israelites were indeed very generous in their giving to God for the construction of the Tabernacle.

- One commentator suggests that they very possibly may have given as much as 13-20 million dollars according to today's standards.

- This sort of stands to reason because later in Exodus we're told that they gave so much that Moses had to tell them to stop giving!

Exodus 36:4-7 4 So all the skilled craftsmen who were doing all the work on the sanctuary left their work 5 and said to Moses, "The people are bringing more than enough for doing the work the LORD commanded to be done." 6 Then Moses gave an order and they sent this word throughout the camp: "No man or woman is to make anything else as an offering for the sanctuary." And so the people were restrained from bringing more, 7 because what they already had was more than enough to do all the work. NIV

3 And this is the offering which you shall take from them: gold, silver, and bronze; 4 blue, purple, and scarlet thread, fine linen, and goats' hair; 5 ram skins dyed red, badger skins, and acacia wood; 6 oil for the light, and spices for the anointing oil and for the sweet incense; 7 onyx stones, and stones to be set in the ephod and in the breastplate.

- This is where it gets not only real interesting, but real exciting as well. Now, at first glance, this seems like "too much information."

- Upon further examination, one realizes that there is a proverbial "method behind the madness" of this strange concoction of materials.

- I suggest to you that each and every one of these materials points to the person of Jesus Christ, down to the seemingly minute detail.

Gold: Is a picture of His deity.

Silver: Is a picture of the "30" pieces of silver and His betrayal for our redemption.

Bronze: Is a picture of fire and His judgment.

Blue: Is the dye of a shellfish, seemingly in several different hues and a picture of heaven.

Purple: Is from the murex snail; a purple-red color, and a picture of His royal majesty.

Scarlet: Is from a worm (*coccus ilicis*). It dies on a tree excreting a scarlet fluid to give birth, a picture of His death on a tree.

Fine linen: Modern linens have 86 threads p/inch; Linen in Egyptian tombs had 152 p/inch. This is a picture of His holiness

Goat Hair coverings: They were usually black and coarse. This is a picture of the atonement. (The Scapegoat)

Rams' skins: Would customarily have the wool removed and would be like fine leather. A picture of His sacrifice. (The ram sacrificed instead of Isaac Abraham's only begotten son.)

Badger skins: Which were used for shoes as protection for the feet. This is a picture of bringing the good news of peace with God. (Ephesians 6 - the shoes as part of the armor.)

Acaicia wood: From out of dry ground, it has thorns on it. Isaiah 53:2 pictures Jesus as a root out of dry ground, no outward beauty that we would desire Him. Arabs pierce the side of Acaicia trees to get a gummy balm which is a healing ointment. This pictures the wooden cross, His crown of thorns, His pierced side, and His stripes by which we are healed.

8 And let them make Me a sanctuary, that I may dwell among them.

- It even gets better, notice that God says; "make Me a sanctuary that I may dwell among you." It's even more intricate and more exciting.

-  The word "Tabernacle" is the same one used describing Jesus in John 1:14 ...the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us.
-  The word "dwelt" is the Hebrew word "skenu" which means "to tent, encamp, occupy, reside, or tabernacle."
-  The Tabernacle was to be a picture for them and point them to the person of Jesus Christ Who would be their coming Messiah.
-  The Tabernacle will not only picture the Christ, it will picture the cross and it's finished work by Jesus Christ for the whole world.

TABERNACLE	JESUS CHRIST
A temporary dwelling place, a tent	Temporarily with us in tent form (bodily)
Born in the wilderness	Born in a manger
Humble in its outward appearance	Humble in His appearance
Beautiful and full of riches inwardly	Beautiful and offers His riches inwardly
Was in place for about 33 years	Lived for about 33 years
God's glory dwells in it	God's glory dwells in Him
Where God meets man	How we meet and get to God as man
In the midst of the Israelites camp	He is in the midst of us where two or more are
The law was preserved	The law was fulfilled
A place of sacrifice	He was placed as the sacrifice
A place of worship	He is the focus of our worship

9 According to all that I show you, that is, the pattern of the tabernacle and the pattern of all its furnishings, just so you shall make it.

- There is a reason why God is here telling Moses to do it exactly as He says to do it according to the pattern of all its furnishings.
- Not only was the Tabernacle a picture of Jesus and the finished work on the cross, it was a picture of that which is in Heaven now.
- The writer of Hebrews fills in some of the blanks for us and explains to us the significance of all of these details related to how it's built.

Hebrews 8:5-6 5 They serve at a sanctuary that is a copy and shadow of what is in heaven. This is why Moses was warned when he was about to build the tabernacle: "See to it that you make everything according to the pattern shown you on the mountain." 6 But the ministry Jesus has received is as superior to theirs as the covenant of which he is mediator is superior to the old one, and it is founded on better promises. NIV

10 "And they shall make an ark of acacia wood; two and a half cubits shall be its length, a cubit and a half its width, and a cubit and a half its height. 11 And you shall overlay it with pure gold, inside and out you shall overlay it, and shall make on it a molding of gold all around.

- Again, notice the extreme attention given to even the most nebulous detail. There is good reason for these details as we'll see shortly.
- This Ark of acacia wood was a wooden box that was covered in gold. This pictures Jesus' humanity, with wood, and deity, with the gold.
- The Ark, like that of Noah's, was a place of salvation. Just as they found salvation in the Ark then, Israel finds salvation in the Ark now.

12 You shall cast four rings of gold for it, and put them in its four corners; two rings shall be on one side, and two rings on the other side. 13 And you shall make poles of acacia wood, and overlay them with gold. 14 You shall put the poles into the rings on the sides of the ark, that the ark may be carried by them. 15 The poles shall be in the rings of the ark; they shall not be taken from it.

- The Ark was only to be carried by the gold covered acacia wood poles that were inserted into the gold rings at the four corners.
- To touch the Ark apart from the gold covered wood meant certain death. Apart from Jesus, the wages of our sin is certain death.
- We have an incident of this happening when David was transporting the Ark back to Jerusalem. It's recorded in 2 Samuel 6:6-7.

2 Samuel 6:6-7 6 When they came to the threshing floor of Nacon, Uzzah reached out and took hold of the ark of God, because the oxen stumbled. 7 The LORD's anger burned against Uzzah because of his irreverent act; therefore God struck him down and he died there beside the ark of God. NIV

- One might question Uzzah's death as disproportionate to his transgression. King David certainly did, we see this in the next verse:

2 Samuel 6:8 Then David was angry because the LORD's wrath had broken out against Uzzah, and to this day that place is called Perez Uzzah. NIV

- David had no right to be angry. The Lord did, because what Uzzah did, transgressed what God was doing in revealing Himself to them.
- They disobeyed what the Lord had commanded them to do here in Exodus when they carried the Ark. We see this in 2 Samuel 6:3-7.

2 Samuel 6:3-7 3 They set the ark of God on a new cart and brought it from the house of Abinadab, which was on the hill. Uzzah and Ahio, sons of Abinadab, were guiding the new cart 4 with the ark of God on it, and Ahio was walking in front of it. 5 David and the whole house of Israel were celebrating with all their might before the LORD, with songs and with harps, lyres, tambourines, sistruums and cymbals. 6 When they came to the threshing floor of Nacon, Uzzah reached out and took hold of the ark of God, because the oxen stumbled. NIV

16 And you shall put into the ark the Testimony which I will give you.

- What was the "Testimony" that God was going to give them to place into the Ark? It was "The Ten Commandments," kept in the Ark!
- This is profound! The Ten Commandments can only be kept, "in the Ark." I can't keep "The Ten Commandments!" I can't, but He did.
- The Ark is Jesus, and the Commandments are kept in the Ark. The Ark kept the Commandments, as Jesus kept the Commandments!

17 "You shall make a mercy seat of pure gold; two and a half cubits shall be its length and a cubit and a half its width.18 And you shall make two cherubim of gold; of hammered work you shall make them at the two ends of the mercy seat.19 Make one cherub at one end, and the other cherub at the other end; you shall make the cherubim at the two ends of it of one piece with the mercy seat. 20 And the cherubim shall stretch out their wings above, covering the mercy seat with their wings, and they shall face one another; the faces of the cherubim shall be toward the mercy seat. 21 You shall put the mercy seat on top of the ark, and in the ark you shall put the Testimony that I will give you. 22 And there I will meet with you, and I will speak with you from above the mercy seat, from between the two cherubim which are on the ark of the Testimony, about everything which I will give you in commandment to the children of Israel.

- Notice that God is giving Moses the instructions for what is to be on the inside of the Holy of Holies even before the Tabernacle is built.
- Normally, you build the structure first, then design the interior and select the furnishings and themes for the interior last.
- One commentator has suggested that one of the reasons for this is because God is saying that He first wants fellowship with them.

- It's also interesting to note that in their fellowship with God, they wouldn't meet at the Ark, but at the Mercy Seat covering the Ark.
- This clearly pictures the finished work of Christ on the cross as His body lay, with two Cherubim at each end of His hammered body.
- When the High Priest would enter the Holy of Holies on the Day of Atonement, he would sprinkle blood on the mercy seat for their sins.

- This is huge, and we don't want to miss it. God looks down on the Ark with the law that can't be kept by us, and was only kept by Him.
- The law was broken by us, so His body had to be broken for us. God sees His broken body, and shed blood covering the broken law.
- One has well said that; "when God looks down from heaven upon us, He sees not our sin, but His Son Who paid in full for our sin.

- The Apostle Paul, by the Holy Spirit, writes about this profound truth in his letter to the Roman church. It's recorded in Romans 3:21-25.

Romans 3:21-25 21 But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets; 22 Even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe: for there is no difference: 23 For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God; 24 Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus: 25 Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God; KJV

- It's interesting to note that the Greek word for propitiation is "hilasterion" and is also used for the "mercy seat."
- What Paul is saying to the church in Rome, is that "Jesus is our mercy seat." He's the only place we find remission of sins.